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# WORKS IN PROGRESS

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

## Things Left Unsaid After the Seattle Police Killings

**By Joshua Neuhouser**

A silence about the role of police in our society has emerged following the firebombing of four police cars in Seattle on Oct. 22 and the subsequent murder of Officer Timothy Brenton this Halloween. After the shooting, Seattle alternative weekly *The Stranger* stressed that "police officers are the gutsiest people on our streets, our closest approximations of Supermen and Wonder Women."

The *Seattle Weekly* has decided to refer to the police as "peace officers," despite the Seattle Police Department's violent record, which this year alone has included the brutal beating of a 15-year-old while she was handcuffed in her jail cell and an assault on an innocent man (who had not been resisting arrest) that put him in a coma from which he will probably never awake. Yet this is exactly what is left unsaid. Just as the aftermath of September 11th prevented people in the US from having a sane discussion on foreign policy – exactly the discussion that we needed to understand what happened that day – so has the death of Officer Brenton kept locals from bringing up the issue of police brutality, even though the shooting was a direct response to the culture of silence and impunity at the SPD. And while so many people, from police representatives to reporters to ordinary citizens, have said that the murder of Brenton was a great tragedy, it undeniably was – but not in the way that they probably meant. The original meaning of tragedy referred to an unavoidable catastrophe, where the victim unintentionally brings about their own demise. It's neither good nor bad. Like a farmer watching their chickens coming home to roost in the evening, it simply is. As this paper goes to press, four more police officers have been killed in Lakewood. While these killings are almost certainly unrelated, one thing that connects them is that in both cases, the investigators have said that they can't seem to establish a motive other than a desire to kill police officers. It is now more important than ever to understand why this is happening.

> At what point do you draw the line and demand that the police start policing themselves or face the consequences?

There is no reason to doubt that Brenton was a good family man and a loving father, but there is also no reason to doubt primary suspect Christopher Monfort's credentials as a concerned citizen. As a private security guard, he had every reason to desire an orderly, crime-free society and had no criminal record besides a few traffic infringements. He was active in student politics during his college days and at one point ran for student Senate at Highline Community College, where he was studying law and justice. He wanted to be a police officer.

While attending the University of Washington, he became influenced by Paul Butler, author of *Let's Get Free: A Hip-Hop Theory of Justice*.

Butler had initially chosen a career as a federal prosecutor out of what he describes as an intense desire for justice in the world, a desire to punish bad people – only to realize that by helping to create the largest prison population in the world, he had in fact become one of those bad people himself. Monfort's graduate work built on Butler's writings on jury nullification, a controversial procedure that allows juries to acquit a defendant that might be guilty. Butler is a vocal advocate of nullification, arguing that it is time for jurors to acquit all those guilty of nonviolent offenses as an act of civil disobedience, under the belief that it is far worse to lock up for years on end a citizen who is not a threat to the safety of others than it is to let them go unpunished.

> Butler initially chose a career as federal prosecutor only to realize that by helping create the largest prison population in the world, he had become one of those bad people himself.

Monfort's life took a similar turn as he gave up his dream of becoming an officer but continued to study law and justice. Since graduation he has devoted his free time to volunteering with the American Civil Liberties Union and working with incarcerated youth, who were apparently quite fond of him. Since then, he has attended rallies against police brutality, and when his Tukwila apartment was raided on Nov. 6, police found an arsenal of bomb-making supplies and several assault rifles. Monfort is also alleged to have written the following note that was left at the scene of the squad car bombing:

*October 22nd is the 14th National day of protest to stop police brutality.*

*These deaths are dedicated to Deputy Travis Bruner, he stood by and did nothing, As Deputy Paul Sheen brutally beat and* [sic] *unarmed 14 year old Girl in their care.*

*You Swear a Solemn Oath to Protect US from All Harm, That includes You!*

*Start policing each other or get ready to attend a lot of police funerals.*

*We Pay your bills.*

*You Work for us.*

Yet Assistant Police Chief Jim Pugel claims that the motive isn't clear, and that Monfort comes across as a man of contradictions. The investigation is ignoring a political motive and is currently determining whether "a deeply personal grievance" such as "the death of a loved one, loss of job or status, divorce, financial hardship, or other failure" caused him to target police.

Is the man who shot Brenton a monster, as many argue? It is easy to condemn the killing of Brenton, as it was clearly premeditated and committed in cold blood, some-

▸ **POLICE KILLINGS,** continued on page 8

## *Ousted worker finds support from solidarity network*

**By Jeff Berryhill**

On the evening of Nov. 2nd, one day before elections would significantly alter the make-up of the Olympia city council, 40 people gathered outside the chamber of the Olympia City Hall. The people gathered were carrying signs reading "No to Racism, No to Lorig" and distributing leaflets imploring the council to deny a development contract to a construction firm from Seattle called Lorig Associates.

> One group member urged the City to choose a developing firm aside from Lorig for a proposed $9 million parking garage and residential project.

When the meeting began a majority of the group left their signs outside and entered the chamber. During the public comment period one member of the group addressed the council, urging them to choose a development firm aside from Lorig Associates for a proposed $9 million parking garage and residential project. At the conclusion of the address, the group applauded and cheered in a roaring fashion, then quickly exited the meeting. The prompt exit was done purposefully. The group wanted to demonstrate that racism should not be tolerated.

Amongst the people gathered that evening was a woman by the name of Patricia Milton. After working for Lorig for nine difficult and frustrating years, Patricia was released from the firm last November. Patricia explained to me that since that time she has encountered serious hardships. However, upon leaving the chamber that night she was in tremendous spirits, remarking about how empowered she has been by her struggle.

The council did not make a decision on the matter at the meeting held on the 2nd. They reserved judgment on the matter until the November 17th. At that meeting an even larger group gathered, passing out leaflets, holding signs, and addressing the council. This time, Patricia Milton delivered the first public speech of her life. It proved thoughtful and inspiring, reflecting the careful preparation she had undertaken.

After some deliberation, the council decided against embarking on this $9.5 million project, citing budgetary concerns. The group and especially Patricia were thrilled, declaring the ruling a victory for their cause. Patricia feels this was a powerful step in her pursuit of justice.

According to Milton, during her period of employment at Lorig Associates she experienced repeated obstacles in attaining advancement. She came to believe that race contributed to her stagnation, having seen very few people of color employed at the Seattle-based firm during her tenure. Patricia says she heard disparaging racist comments by her co-workers and a racist joke had circulated the office e-mail. Meanwhile, Milton performed a variety of tasks and possessed numerous skills that would lend towards promotions, but they always seemed to elude her. Finally she was granted a temporary promotion with an accompanying pay increase only to be demoted after training her replacement.

Milton says she had approached a couple of attorneys about her matter, but found their advice and assistance lacking. Then one day while she was living with a friend, she saw a flier posted by the Seattle Solidarity Network, a local worker and tenant advocacy organization. The flier offered to provide assistance to people who are facing difficulties with their boss or landlord. Milton felt immediately this flier held the answers she was looking for.

She soon met with the folks involved with SeaSol. Together they developed a strategy for obtaining greater compensation from Lorig. This process was a collaborative endeavor as the members shared their knowledge and experience in crafting a campaign in conjunction with Patricia. Milton was impressed by the group, admiring their passion and commitment. So in spite of having never been involved in a social justice campaign, she decided this was the appropriate course.

The first thing the group did was produce a letter clearly articulating their demands. They then assembled a large group of people and hand-delivered the letter to the office at Lorig Associates. After failing to receive a satisfactory reply, they began picketing outside of residential housing Lorig Associates had available for lease. In addition, the group researched the business dealings of the firm. Through this research process, they discovered a couple of bids Lorig had placed on developments in Newcastle and Olympia. The campaign then committed itself to pressuring both municipal governments to reconsider doing business with Lorig. Similar to historic struggles for justice, the group operates under the assumption that by impacting the offender's bottom line, they can be persuaded to act appropriately.

As mentioned above, Patricia had endured much hardship along the way. At first, she was met with resistance from Lorig in her attempt to obtain unemployment compensation. Like many other Americans in these difficult economic times, unemployment placed difficult strains on Milton's marriage. Furthermore, Milton spent a period of time without a home, living at a friends' house and at the YWCA shelter. Milton claims the duress and frustration she encountered through her dismissal have been so difficult she has difficulty searching for a job at the moment. To compound all of this, Lorig Associates has just filed a civil suit against Patricia and her supporters at the Seattle Solidarity Network, aimed at prohibiting her and the group from continuing with their campaign. No doubt, this suit will be extremely taxing, as assigned counsel is not granted for defendants in civil cases.

While this struggle has proven arduous at times for Milton, particularly with news

▸ **SOLIDARITY,** continued on page 5

# WORKS IN PROGRESS

*Works In Progress* is a free, volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of *Works In Progress* and are solely those of the authors.

**Submissions**
Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

*WIP* reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number.

Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

*If you don't see your issue being covered in* Works In Progress*, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)*

Send submissions to *olywip@gmail* or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

**Governing Tool**
The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

WIP *will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by* WIP *to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but* WIP *reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

**Mission Statement**
"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. *Works In Progress* is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

**Anti-Discrimination Clause**
We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

**Back Issues**
Some back issues are available in the Timberland Library system. *WIP* is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.


## WORKERS IN PROGRESS

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| Renee Cruickshank | Jeff Sowers |
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"When I was a naive young recruit in Spain, I used to wonder why soldiers bayoneted oil paintings, shot the noses off statues and defecated into grand pianos. I now understand: it was to teach civilians the deepest sort of respect for men in uniform — uncontrollable fear." - Kurt Vonnegut


**WIP Schedule**

**Submission Deadline:**
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# ANNOUNCEMENTS/EVENTS

## POWER Outage - Brainstorming for Change

December 7, Potluck at 5:30 PM, on-site child care from 6:00 - 8:00 PM
First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE

POWER Outage is a monthly get together in Olympia for POWER (Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights) and community members. It happens on the first Monday of each month and starts at 5:30 p.m. with a potluck followed by a meeting.

In September we brainstormed the changes we want to see this legislative session. Now we need to brainstorm how to make our voices heard! For more information, email: welfarerights@riseup.net or call (360) 352-9716, toll-free (866) 343-9716

POWER is an organization of low-income parents and allies advocating for a strong social safety net while working toward a world where children and care giving are truly valued, and the devastation of poverty has been eradicated.

## Art POWER: Arts & crafts for a good cause

December 12-13, 10am-5pm
Whittle, 116 Capitol Way N, Downtown Olympia

Come shop for unique holiday gifts for friends and family, eat fabulous dessert, and enjoy live music, all while supporting an important cause. All proceeds benefit artists and POWER, Parents Organizing for Welfare and Economic Rights.

POWER is a local organization of low-income parents and community members fighting for social and economic justice. We will be accepting donations of art until December 11th. Artists can keep up to 50% of the proceeds. For more information, call (360) 352-9726, or email welfarerights@riseup.net

## No Troop Surge to Afghanistan!

December 10, 11:30 AM - 2:30 PM, in front of
The Olympian, 4th Ave and Bethel St NE

Want some peace with that Nobel Prize? Obama will be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on December 10th, yet he will likely send more troops to Afghanistan, escalating the war. After 8 years of war, $228 billion have been sunk into Afghanistan, and thousands of US soldiers and innocent Afghan civilians have been killed or permanently disabled. And for what?

80% of Afghanistan is still controlled by religious fundamentalist warlords who cut deals with the US government. US-backed President Karzai was just "reelected" using blatantly fradulent, corrupt tactics. 2/3 of Afghans still struggle to survive on less than $2 a day. 77% of Afghans still lack access to clean water. Female literacy is still at 14% And now, a majority of Americans (57%) now oppose the war.

Join our protest! No more troops to Afghanistan! Bring them all home now! End the media blackout on opposition to the war! Money for jobs, education, health care, NOT WAR!

For more information, email EvergreenSocialistAlternative@gmail.com

## Strike For Climate Justice

December 11 and 12

Jeff "Free" Luers has been serving a 22 year and 8 month sentence for the 2001 burning of 3 Sport Utility Vehicles in Eugene, Oregon. Jeff has fought this sentence through the Oregon courts. In February 2007, a unanimous decision from the Oregon Court of Appeals sent the Luers case back to Circuit Court for resentencing. A February 2008 hearing reduced his sentence to 10 years. A supplemental judgment from October 1, 2009 further reduced the sentence by 30% and Jeff Luers is now expected to be released on December 16, 2009. Jeff has called for a general strike for climate justice on December 11 and 12, 2009.

For more information, visit www.freejeffluers.org

## Vigil at Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma

December 12, Noon - 3 PM
1623 E. J Street, on Tacoma's industrial tideflats

Join us every second Saturday of every month from 12 noon to 3 pm as we maintain our protest of the Northwest Detention Center. This private profit-making prison holds immigrants that the federal government is waiting to deport. It is overcrowded and conditions are bad. It's at 1623 E. "J" Street in the industrial tideflats area east of downtown Tacoma. Join us, and participate in the vigil for human rights. Some volunteers also bring food and offer support to people visiting detainees. Carpools leave from Grocery Outlet on W. Harrison (near Division) at 11:00 am. To confirm info, contact: bridgesnotwalls@riseup.net.

## In Transition: From Oil Dependence to Local Resilience

December 15, 7 PM - 9 PM
MIXX 96, corner of State and Washington

This newly-released documentary about the Transition Movement is about change, about hope, about a practical vision for creating a post-consumer, post fossil fuel society where ordinary people can make a difference. Following the film, we'll celebrate the season by decorating a Fossil Fuel Fir Tree with items we will learn to live without when we run out of fossil fuels. Please bring items in reality, in miniature or in paper suitable for a five foot tree.

This event is free, with cider and goodies provided.

For more info, email info@transitionolympia.org

## Stonewall Youth 6th Annual Winter Gayla

Saturday, December 5, 6 PM
Eagles Ballroom, 805 4th Ave E

Welcome to our 6th annual Winter Gayla on Saturday, December 5th at the Eagles Hall Ballroom in Olympia. This is a party to celebrate and raise money for the work of Stonewall Youth. Join us for an evening of delicious food, drinks, and entertainment. We will have raffle items, a dessert dash, and a silent art auction, as well as many other chances to support the amazing community work of Stonewall Youth. Remember to bring your checkbook and get ready to have fun! Formal dress is encouraged.

Ticket price includes dinner, drinks, and entertainment. Food is proudly catered by MIJAS (Mujeres Improving Job Abilities and Skills); a new transitional restaurant conceived by a group of Latina women supporting women in crisis of domestic violence. Our art auction includes unique works from artists including Sarah Utter, Kimya Dawson, Jennifer Combe, and many more! Seating is limited and all attendees must purchase online tickets in advance through BuyOlympia.com.

Purchase Tickets Today! - Supporter $40 - Sustainer $70 - Saint $150

For more information, visit stonewallyouth.org.

## Resolving the Nuclear Impasse

December 16, 7 PM
Town Hall, 8th & Seneca, Seattle

This community conference sponsored by local Jewish community groups and peace organizations will explore ways of resolving the Iranian nuclear crisis through negotiation rather than violence. Many people are deeply concerned that the U.S. and/or Israel may soon repeat interventionist mistakes made in Iraq and Afghanistan. This conference will present a comprehensive approach that could resolve major differences through diplomacy and open up a new era in relations between these three current enemies. It will also discuss the best means of supporting the Iran reform movement in its efforts to encourage a government based on democracy and tolerance. Three experts on Iran and Israel will discuss U.S. and Israeli policy options including sanctions and a possible military attack.

Info: (206) 632-0662 ext. 30. $10 suggested donation through Brown Paper Tickets www.brownpapertickets.com/event/89086

## Fellowship of Reconciliation's 34th Annual Holiday Peace Vigil

December 19, Noon - 1 PM
South side of Percival Landing on 4th Ave

The annual vigil is an Olympia tradition. Signs are provided, but participants may bring their own. Children are welcome. Participants may enjoy free refreshments nearby after the vigil.

"During this holiday season of joy and good will, let us set aside all violence and militarism, which are the opposites of joy and good will," said Glen Anderson, vigil organizer. "The vigil gives participants and passersby an opportunity to pause and consider choosing peace instead of violence. Peace is so much more consistent with the holiday spirit."

The vigil is sponsored by the Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), a local affiliate of an interfaith, international pacifist organization founded in 1914.

The Olympia FOR has also sponsored a weekly peace vigil in Sylvester Park at the corner of Legion and Capitol Way, from 12 noon to 1 p.m. every Wednesday since March 5, 1980, and another vigil at the south end of Percival Landing from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. every Friday since November 1998.

For information contact Glen Anderson at (360) 491-9093 or glen@olywa.net or visit the Olympia FOR's website, www.olyfor.org

# Why Is the U.S. Really In Afghanistan? The Geopolitics of the War

**by Erik Shutvet**

Influential U.S. geostrategist, former national security advisor and current Obama advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, wrote in his 1997 book The Grand Chessboard that the "objective of United States power projection is to prevent a cohesion of economic powers throughout Eurasia." Brzezinski's view was that control of Central Asia was essential to achieving this objective. This view was incorporated into the Bush administration's geostrategy. Four years later the U.S. military was in Afghanistan, with a foothold into Central Asia. Recently, President Obama announced an increase in troop numbers in Afghanistan. He speaks of the necessity of the conflict, which is at least partly true, though not for the reasons that he states. There is one dominant reason for why the U.S. is in Afghanistan: hegemony. Within this reason come others, such as the preservation and expansion of NATO, but the most important is the desire for control of the immense energy resources of the Caspian Sea region.

First, an overview of the conflict. Following the collapse of the Soviet-backed secular socialist government a new civil war erupted between the various Mujahedeen factions who had previously been backed by the U.S. The conflict cut primarily along ethnic lines. The Taliban were an ethnic Pashtun (who make up about 40% of the population) Pakistan-backed group. What came to be known as the 'Northern Alliance' was an Iran and Turkey backed alliance of warlords that were mostly composed of ethnic Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazaras. Essentially the U.S. is backing one side in a civil war, the side that is willing to cooperate with the U.S. Both the 'Northern Alliance' and the Taliban were and are reactionary Islamists and their disagreement was over who held power not over any social or economic policies, much less women's rights.

When it comes to women's rights the current Afghan government of Hamid Karzai is at least as bad as the Taliban. Women are being imprisoned in greater numbers than before, including for being raped. Violence against women is rampant. The number of women committing suicide, often by burning themselves, was terrible before but is now epidemic. Yet a façade has been set up to give the appearance of progress. For example in 2005, 28% of parliamentary delegates were women. Unfortunately, according to the Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan, most of these women serve as fronts for male warlords.

Activists in Olympia march in protest of the ongoing war in Afghanistan. Photo courtesy of www.forwardphoto.com

The Taliban supposedly cannot be allowed to retake Afghanistan and use it as a base for terror, etc. In fact the Taliban never had plans outside the Afghanistan/Pakistan region. As Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani journalist put it, "they have a local agenda. They see themselves as nationalists." Since the invasion they have become a loose alliance of various anti-occupation groups, with "Taliban" becoming a generic term for them. Most join them to fight the occupation, especially after their relatives are torn apart by U.S. bombs. They have no connection to Al-Qaeda, which is a transnational global jihadist network. It has been well-acknowledged, even by top U.S. military officials, that Al-Qaeda presence in the area is weak. Furthermore, anyone who knows how Al-Qaeda operates knows that territory is meaningless to them. Guarding Afghanistan against their 'return' is nonsense and is an obvious excuse for continued occupation.

Eight years of occupation and Afghanistan is still statistically one of the worst places to live, with a lack of basic services for much of the populace, high infant mortality rates, crushing poverty and insecurity. The Afghan government is filled with warlords and war criminals who now rule thanks to U.S. backing. In fact, Afghanistan is now ranked as the second most corrupt country in the world. Except for those Afghans who have benefited from the occupation, including the minority that have gotten very wealthy, most want the foreign troops to leave. The presence of foreign troops is legitimizing the Taliban, and statistics show that as the number of troops increase, violence increases.

As for the U.S.'s geostrategy; there is an image about the Central Asian 'stans' (which is a Persian suffix meaning 'place of') as being a collection of random funnily-named countries in some backwater part of the world. Historically, Central Asia has been among the most significant areas in the entire world, and remains so today. It is not only awash in natural gas, oil, and other key resources, but also lies at a crucial junction between the heavily populated emerging powers of China and India and the oil-rich Middle East. Long a traditional battleground for competing empires, today it is again the scene of a clash between rival powers. Though technically in South Asia, Afghanistan is a strategically situated location for U.S. power projection north into Central Asia.

During the so-called 'Great Game' of the 19th century, the British and Russian empires competed for dominance in Central Asia. Britain and Russia agreed on Afghanistan as a buffer state between them, drawing its borders with no consideration for the various peoples living there. Today a new great game is on between the U.S./NATO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a Russia and China led economic/military alliance formed in 2001, which includes all of the Central Asian states except Turkmenistan. The key prize is control over the pipelines and hence the flow of that precious black and blue gold, oil and gas.

Eurasia is the geopolitical pivot of the world and the location of two-thirds of its energy resources. "It is imperative," Brzezinski stated in 1997, "that no Eurasian challenger emerges capable of dominating Eurasia and thus of also challenging America.... Potentially, the most dangerous scenario would be a grand coalition of China, Russia, and perhaps Iran." With the formation of the SCO this 'dangerous scenario' is now close to reality. Iran may even join the SCO in the coming years, which would give it NATO style protection (an attack on Iran would be an attack on all other member states). The U.S. is seeking to separate this growing alliance and it is in Central Asia where the interests of this alliance converge. By surrounding these challengers with bases and client states and establishing control over major natural gas/oil reserves and transit routes, the U.S. hopes to maintain its hegemony over Eurasia.

Iran, which bridges the Caspian Sea and Middle East oil fields, is nearly surrounded by U.S. bases and efforts to isolate it politically are ongoing. But it is China that is considered the ultimate geopolitical enemy by the U.S. elites. Ideally the U.S. wants to cut China off from the energy of the Middle East and Caspian Sea. The U.S. particularly wants to separate China and Iran, which have become close partners with Iran shipping desperately needed oil to China and China providing technology, infrastructure, weaponry, etc. to Iran.

Meanwhile, the centuries-long western efforts to contain Russia continue. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, U.S. policy has been to draw the former Soviet republics away from Russian influence, ideally into NATO, and cordon off Russian expansion. The 2008 Russia-Georgia war was a rare hot outbreak of this new cold war. The U.S. views NATO as a vehicle for maintaining U.S. hegemony over Europe and opposing Eurasian competitors like Russia. U.S. policy makers see the war in Afghanistan as important to keeping NATO together.

A re-emergent Russia and Iran are increasingly cooperating, which is highly disturbing to the U.S., given that together they control 20% of the world's oil reserves and 50% of its gas reserves. Russia supplies about 33% of Europe's natural gas, giving them too much political leverage for NATO's liking. Constructing pipelines that bypass Russia and Iran and thus shut them out of lucrative markets is a key feature of U.S. policy in the region. A new pipeline was finished in 2006 that goes from energy-rich and pro-NATO Azerbaijan through Georgia, where a pro-NATO government was installed in a U.S. backed 'revolution' in 2004, and ends in Turkey next to the U.S.'s airbase in Incirlik. Plans are underway to connect Turkmenistan to the line and expand it into Europe. The crux of the conflict is that Russia desires Central Asian fossil fuels to flow north and U.S. wants them to flow south and thus out of Russian control.

Afghanistan itself is largely resource poor, but looking to its northwest, the Caspian Sea region is estimated to possess roughly 200 to 250 billion barrels of oil (Iraq is estimated at 112 billion barrels). In 2008 Turkmenistan was estimated to have the second most natural gas in the world, with only 20% less than Russia, a staggering amount given its small size. At the moment 90% of its natural gas exports flow north through Russia. However, Turkmenistan has made agreements to send much of its gas south through the TAPI pipeline, if it ever gets built.

That the U.S. desired to construct a pipeline through Afghanistan is well known. Journalist and geopolitical commentator Pepe Escobar explains that, "...it all comes back to TAPI - the Turkmenistan/Afghanistan/Pakistan/India gas pipeline, the key reason Afghanistan (as an energy transit corridor) is of any strategic importance to the US, apart from being deployed as an aircraft carrier stationed right at the borders of geopolitical competitors China and Russia." Unfortunately for the U.S., the pipeline would currently go through Taliban controlled territory so whether this will happen soon is doubtful. However, coincidently much of Obama's Afghan surge troops are planned to be put in the provinces the pipeline is supposed to run through, with new bases to be constructed along the way.

Negotiations with the de-facto Taliban government to construct the TAPI pipeline continued as late as March 2001. When the Taliban insisted on transit fees, the negotiations broke down and the Bush administration began talking about taking the Taliban out. The attacks on 9/11 soon provided a rationale. Unfortunately for the U.S., instability in Afghanistan has delayed TAPI far too long. A deal was struck in 2008 to construct the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline, which will open a new energy corridor in South Asia supplied by Iran. The U.S. put pressure on Pakistan to cancel this plan, but both India and Pakistan are far too desperate for energy. The U.S. will almost certainly make further attempts to halt construction.

In line with that, the U.S. appears to be attempting to destabilize Pakistan. Pakistan is a staunch ally of China and a critical link in the future energy corridor from Iran to China. If the U.S. can destabilize Pakistan by fomenting ethno-sectarian and political conflict and delegitimizing the government by constant missile strikes from drones, then they can cut this corridor off. Pepe Escobar explains that additionally, "From a Pentagon dream scenario point of view, the Balkanization of Pakistan would mean dismantling 'Terrorist Central'...It would 'free' India from its enemy Pakistan so India can work very closely with Washington as an effective counter power to the relentless rise of China."

Furthermore, a destabilized Pakistan would allow the U.S. to seize control of Baluchistan, the southwestern resource-rich province of Pakistan that borders Iran, thereby stopping the IPI pipeline that runs through it and capturing the ultra-strategic Chinese-built port of Gwadar. This is a new deep water port that Pakistan hopes will revitalize its economy and where China plans to base some of its navy, extending its influence in the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and Africa.

For the moment though Brzezinski's nightmare coalition of Russia, China, and Iran seem to be on top in this new great game. The U.S. has failed to construct the TAPI pipeline and it has failed to pull the Central Asian states away from Russia and China. Pakistan is unlikely to 'Balkanize' and Iran is not the pariah state the U.S. would like it to be. While the U.S. has attempted to use its comparative advantage in superior military might to maintain its hegemony, China and Russia have been more subtly and cleverly maneuvering.

Afghanistan is the U.S.'s foothold into Central Asia and key to its grand geopolitical strategy. The U.S. fully intends to maintain bases there indefinitely, or at least until its strategy changes. U.S. military policy makers are talking about staying for at least 20 to 25 years, which is how long they estimate it may take to pacify the insurgency. To summarize, the goal of the U.S. war in Afghanistan is to secure energy resources and to "prevent a cohesion of economic powers throughout Eurasia". The stated goals of humanitarianism, women's rights, and combating terrorism are pure rhetoric and irrelevant when it comes to the geopolitical goals of an imperial power like the U.S.

*Erik Shutvet is a student at the Evergreen State College.*

# License to Abuse Renewed by Olympia Police

**by Larry Mosqueda**

**BACKGROUND**

The federal courtroom trial of William W. Hamilton and Larry Mosqueda v. the City of Olympia and various police officers was held in Tacoma during the workdays of November 4-10, 2009. Hamilton and I accused the Olympia police of abusing them on November 10-11, 2007. These abuses occurred during the 11 days of protest in November when the military was using the Port of Olympia to bring Strykers and other equipment to be repaired, refurbished, and returned to Iraq in that illegal and immoral war. The Olympia police also attacked dozens of other protesters.

The facts of the case are as follows: Hamilton charged that he was attacked on November 10, when he was at the port entrance at Franklin and Market. He was told to go the gravel area near the corner. He complied but was still peppered sprayed (twice) in this designated safe area. On November 11, Hamilton was hit by police batons and shot with pepper balls as he attempted to cross the street at the crosswalk. It is especially ironic that Hamilton, a Marine Veteran of the Vietnam War, was shot on Veterans Day.

I was directly pepper sprayed in the face at close range at 4th and Plum on November 11. I was attempting to help a young woman on the curb who had been knocked down by the police and then kicked back to the curb. This was recorded on video camera by the Olympian newspaper and that evidence was displayed in court.

Despite the fact that my assault was on film, the jury chose to believe the police and found for the police. They also found for the police in the case of Hamilton.

With videotape, how could such a finding happen? One needs to remember the tape of the LAPD beating Rodney King in 1991. The tape clearly demonstrated that the police of Los Angeles were beating King and using massive excessive force. In 1992, four officers were acquitted of assault and excessive force by a Ventura County jury. In 1993 two of the officers were convicted of violating King's federal civil rights. The first acquittal resulted in the Los Angeles Rebellion (riot) of 1992, where 53 people were killed. Having a video record alone is no guarantee that the obvious will be apparent to a jury, once the police attorney and the police spin their tales.

**THE TRIAL- TESTIMONY AND VIDEOS**

The trial began on Wednesday, 11/4/09 in the Federal Court in Tacoma. There were 28 people in the jury pool. The pool was picked from Southwest Washington, which extends to Vancouver, WA. A few of the jurors appeared to be overly anxious to be on the jury, especially some military veterans and those who self identified as being friendly to the police. These self-identified people did not appear to get on the jury, although there may have been some who were less vocal on the jury. Only one person of color made it on the jury.

Don Law, the attorney for the city and police (the defendants), made some rather inflammatory opening statements about the protesters in general using slogans, barricades, identity concealments, ski goggles, etc., which did not apply to anything that either Hamilton or I were doing. Law also stated that the best way for the demonstrators not to get pepper sprayed or assaulted was just to leave, or in other words, not to exercise their right of freedom of speech.

Our attorneys were Christopher Taylor and Legrand Jones. Christopher was the lead attorney and he did an excellent job of research and explaining the law to the jury and judge. Before the trial, the police tried to have the case thrown out and their lawyer attempted to have the case dismissed twice during the trial, but the judge ruled that the case should go to the jury.

The police played the edited videotape of the pepper spraying at the main gate of the Port many times. At first some of the jurors appeared to recoil at the police violence, but it may have desensitized some of the jurors, just as some have argued that the repeated showing of the Rodney King video may have desensitized the jury in that trial.

Some of the police testimony was very revealing. A police officer testified that pepper spray only causes a "temporary discomfort," which is not an injury. Lt. Steve Oderman testified that it was Officer Evers who knocked down the young woman who was next to me after she had gone into the street. Oderman denies that he saw any police kick her. I saw her kicked right before I was pepper sprayed.

Oderman also testified that I was pushing against him and getting into a fighting stance, which, of course, was not true. He should have arrested me if I was going to attack him. Several other people were arrested at 4th and Plum on that day. He also finally identified the officer who attacked me with the pepper spray, Officer Houser. The city and the police had withheld that information for two years.

Officer Houser testified that he made one spraying motion at me and the others in the area starting with the young woman who was on the ground next to me. This is contradicted by the video that was taken by the Olympian newspaper. In slow motion, frame by frame, the video shows Houser walking up behind Oderman and spraying me in the face for at least 5-6 frames (the orange plume is clearly visible). Houser then stops and sprays two others who are standing to my left. He then stops and sprays the young woman who is on the ground, and then backs up and sprays from about 6 feet. Four distinct sprays, all unnecessary, all excessive. Apparently the Federal Court system in Tacoma does not have the capacity to slow down a tape.

In Hamilton's case, the police showed an edited video over and over again that was not directly tied to the time that Hamilton was struck by batons and shot with pepper-balls. This made it look as if he was trying to cross the street within seconds that a truck was driving by. The testimony and the depositions by the police implied that Hamilton was physically endangering the police because of his demeanor, his size, and his Vietnam veteran status. The attacks caused him to seek medical care. The police also testified that they did not arrest him, nor investigate him, for these apparently serious allegations.

Other details were also important. The Chief of Police Gary Michael testified that the Olympia City Jail only has capacity for 24 people with perhaps another 10 in the garage. He stated that it is difficult to put any overflow in the county jail because the charges were not serious felonies. This may be important information for future demonstrations.

An officer testified that when the police grab people and if their muscles tense up, that could be considered "active resistance." This is very convenient for the police since it means if you get frightened they have a right to subdue you because you are a threat to them. If however you go to limp that could be considered resisting arrest. Catch 22.

The jury instructions were fairly explicit. The jury was not supposed to consider what the purpose of the demonstration was or what the police and other demonstrators were doing to each other, just very specific questions about events that occurred to Hamilton and myself. The burden of proof was on the plaintiffs by a "preponderance of evidence," i.e. were the events more likely true than not true. The jury of 8 decided to believe the police misrepresentations, despite having video evidence of police abuse. The ideological socialization that police are our friends and protectors runs deep in our society.

**"TESTILYING"**

Given the nature of the legal system, where the issues are points of law and not justice (two very distinct entities) it was uncertain that we would win this case. The police are very expert at misleading jurors and many citizens are loath to believe that "officers" are not telling them the truth. Those who work in the system often have a reasonable understanding of the obfuscation that occurs by police officers. This is true from right wing people like Harvard professor Alan M. Dershowitz to progressive groups such as the National Lawyers Guild (NLG) and those in between, such as academics and law reviewers.

Dershowitz has noted, "For anyone who has practiced criminal law in the state or Federal courts, the disclosures about rampant police perjury cannot possibly come as a surprise. "Testilying" -- as the police call it -- has long been an open secret among prosecutors, defense lawyers and judges." See "Controlling the Cops; Accomplices To Perjury" in the New York Times, 5/2/94.

The NLG has done several studies on Police Accountability. See the National Police Accountability Project, especially papers by Lynne Wilson, The Use and Abuse of Pepper Spray and The Public's Right of Access to Police Misconduct Files.

A 1996 study published in the University of Colorado Law Review on "Reform the Police" notes "Probably the most stunning evidence of prosecutorial and judicial nonchalance toward police perjury is Myron Orfield's study of the Chicago system.... His study is stunning because, unlike many of the comments on this issue, ... Orfield's findings are based on the views of prosecutors and judges as well as those of defense attorneys. In his survey of these three groups (which together comprised twenty-seven to forty-one individuals, depending on the question), 52% believed that at least 'half of the time' the prosecutor 'knows or has reason to know' that police fabricate evidence at suppression hearings, and 93%, including 89% of the prosecutors, stated that prosecutors had such knowledge of perjury 'at least some of the time.'... Sixty-one percent, including 50% of the state's attorneys, believed that prosecutors know or have reason to know that police fabricate evidence in case reports, and 50% of the prosecutors believed the same with respect to warrants (despite the fact that many prosecutors refused to talk about this latter area). ... While close to half of all respondents believed that prosecutors 'discourage' such perjury and fabrication,... a greater percentage believed that they 'tolerate' it,... and 15% believed that prosecutors actually 'encourage' it.... One former prosecutor described what he called a 'commonly used' technique of steering police testimony by telling officers '[i]f this happens, we win. If this happens, we lose.'.... Most amazingly, 29% of the respondents did not equate lying at a suppression hearing with the crime of perjury.... Although the respondents' views on judicial, as opposed to prosecutorial, attitudes toward testilying were not as directly plumbed in this survey, when asked whether Chicago's criminal justice system effectively controls policy perjury at suppression hearings, 69% of the respondents answered 'no.'...."

**LESSONS FROM THE CASE**

During the Olympia Port Militarization Resistance protest of November 2007, the main issue was always the war in Iraq and trying to find effective non-violent ways to stop it. The community of Olympia has a great deal to be proud of. They effectively found a way to delay the shipments and help to publicize the anti-war movement on a national and international level. Given the illegality and immorality of the war, it was incumbent upon us to resist the war. It is in fact our **duty** to resist. "As (Canadian) Hamilton Action for Social Change has noted, "Under the Nuremberg Principles, you have an obligation NOT to follow the orders of leaders who are preparing crimes against peace and crimes against humanity. We are all bound by what U.S. Chief Prosecutor Robert K. Jackson declared in 1948: [T]he very essence of the [Nuremberg] Charter is that individuals have intentional duties which transcend the national obligations of obedience imposed by the individual state." At the Tokyo War Crimes trial, it was further declared, "[A]nyone with knowledge of illegal activity and an opportunity to do something about it is a potential criminal under international law unless the person takes affirmative measures to prevent commission of the crimes."

Unfortunately, the Olympia police actions made the reactions of the police an issue that needed to be confronted. In this case, it was the Olympia Police that was preventing the citizens from engaging in their lawful duty. We cannot allow ourselves to be cowered into accepting violations of international law. We also cannot allow ourselves to be bullied into believing that such principled actions do not fit the popular conception of "supporting the troops." As I have stated elsewhere: "...The idea that

▸ **MOSQUEDA,** continued on next page

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In the White Building on 4th Avenue (across from the Reef and above Last Word Books) in Room 212. The entrance is to the right of Last Word Books. Our office is up the stairs, down the hall, and to the right.

They are currently accepting applications for internships. Areas of focus include:
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- Donations and advertising
- Medicine
- Receptionist

Their wish list:
- Medicine-making supplies
- Clean, empty tincture bottles
- Organically cultivated or ethically wild-crafted herbs
- Books on herbal medicine, anatomy&physiology, herb/drug interactions, etc.

▸ **MOSQUEDA,** cont. from previous page

those who oppose the Bush plans for war are against the troops is a fundamental lie. Support for the troops is not done by sending them off to a war which is fundamentally unnecessary—support is keeping them home. Support for the troops is not done by lying to them about the purpose and goals of the war and allowing those who will benefit and profit a free ride on the backs of the troops. Support for the troops is not done by making them complicit in an illegal and immoral war—it is done by exposing the lies and giving the troops an opportunity not to be complicit in war crimes."

That the current legal system is terribly flawed is evidenced by not just this case, but more significantly by studies on the system as a whole. See, for example, the Sentencing Project at http://www.sentencingproject.org/template/index.cfm.

The legal system is a tool, however, that we can use now and then to our advantage. We clearly should have won this case, but it was a partial victory by bringing it to court and exposing the actions of the police. As the first Rodney King case demonstrates, it is very difficult to bring legal actions against the police, even when there is video evidence. We should continue to use this forum but not rely on the courts as a place where the people will ultimately get justice. We will win some and lose some here.

On a practical matter, I would recommend that many more people bring video cameras to future demonstration to record the actions and that they keep an unedited copy of the original. They should also write down, contemporaneously, descriptions of events such as police actions, badge numbers, etc. While this will not guarantee justice, it may be more of a tipping point next time.

On a personal note, I would like to add one more point. My wife noted during the trial how much the police appeared to hate me because we were able to bring this action this far. I should note that one of the police who was sued has already shot a young Hispanic male in the back of the neck in another incident. As an older Hispanic male, I should declare that I do not carry a weapon, I do not physically resist the police, and I have a good sense of my surroundings. If one ever hears that the police have physically hurt me, it was a set up and not my physical resistance.

*Larry Mosqueda is a professor at the Evergreen State College.*

▸ **SOLIDARITY,** continued from page 1

of the lawsuit, her determination remains steadfast. During the interview she made reference to the extraordinary gains and achievements of her people. She finds motivation and strength in the rich historical tradition of struggle among black people in the United States. Milton is a mother and she spoke of a responsibility to fight against injustices in hopes of creating a better world for her children and future generations. In fact, she said "I want my kids to grow up and know their mother was a fighter."

Milton has subsequently participated in struggles organized by the Seattle Solidarity Network. In fact she spoke passionately in defense of young man fired on similarly specious grounds. Milton speaks excitedly about remaining involved in struggles for social justice, having witnessed firsthand the power of employing direct action methods.

Patricia Milton has a significant battle before her as we enter the new year, a battle that those concerned about social justice should stay informed about. The experience had by Milton illustrates a number of things, to which we should pay careful attention. As we enter the year 2010, a year that will mark the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, racism is still ever present in our society and must be confronted. In the spirit of SNCC, Patricia and SeaSol have also demonstrated that thoughtful and committed people acting in concert can accomplish significant things.

For ongoing updates please visit seattlesolidarity.net

# Lawyers on the Frontline: Defend the Hated, Go to Jail

Seattle, WA - Lynne Stewart (right) with Pat Levasseur (center), winner of the 2009 Legal Worker of the Year award, and her partner Ralph (left) at this year's National Lawyer's Guild conference. Photo is by Brenna Stewart.

**by Mike Coday**

Attorney Lynne Stewart reported to jail on November 19, 2009 to begin serving a 28 month prison sentence for her work as a defense attorney for the "blind sheikh," Omar Abdel-Rahman. Abdel-Rahman is an Egyptian-born Muslim cleric who issued a fatwa leading to the assassination of Egypt's President Anwar Sadat in 1981. He was jailed and tortured in Egypt for three years on charges of conspiracy in Sadat's death. He was acquitted on the conspiracy charge, but was deported after acquittal and resumed his fundamentalist Islamic work in Afghanistan with Osama bin Laden.

Abdel-Rahman entered the US in 1990 to take control of Al-Qaeda assets here. He was convicted of conspiracy and sentenced to life in prison for his part in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center (WTC). Six people were killed and over a thousand were injured in the 1993 attack. Abdel-Rahman has been an avid instigator of fundamentalist Islamic violence against westerners for most of his life. Regardless of where you stand on questions of peace, justice and democracy in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Israel, or the USA, it is hard to embrace Abdel-Rahman as a good guy. Abdel-Rahman is to the Muslim faith what Jerry Falwell is to Christianity, or what Rush Limbaugh is to journalism: a shrill and fanatic voice for a dead end of the faith and political spectrum. All that said, under the rules of our political and judicial system, Abdel-Rahman is entitled to a vigorous defense and all of the protections of our Constitutional system once he is arrested in this country and that's where Lynne Stewart comes in.

So, who is Lynne Stewart and why should any of us care if she gets jailed for having anything to do with Abdel-Rahman? Here is a brief bio from www.lynnestewart.org:

"Lynne Stewart has been a defense attorney practicing criminal law for 27 years. Prior to becoming a lawyer, Lynne was a teacher in the New York City School system as a children's librarian. Lynne is the mother of three, stepmom to four and the grandmother of seven. Lynne, as a lawyer, has always been a vigorous defender of her clients, who ranged from the many poor people caught in the criminal justice system by the economics and/or the war on drugs to more well known political defendants. These include: David Gilbert, Weather Underground; Richard Williams of the United Freedom Front; Larry Davis, acquitted by reason of self defense of attempted murder of NYPD officers; Sekou Odinga, Black Liberation Army; and Nasser Ahmed, released after being imprisoned for 3 ½ years on non-existent secret evidence. Lynne remains committed to her clients, as their attorney, until they are no longer in the grasp of the State. This is the work of a criminal defense attorney."

I have great respect for any attorney who is so committed to the cause of justice, due process, and civil rights of unpopular criminal defendants like Abdel-Rahman that they rise above the fear-mongering and dehumanization that always accompany the trials of notorious clients. I hold in high esteem any attorney who can see a notorious defendant as a person with inalienable human rights, who is entitled to a vigorous, competent defense. Believe me, this is not the kind of law practice that retires law school debt and makes the Mercedes payments. This is the practice of law that springs from the heart of passionate and committed human beings with the skill and knowledge to pass a bar exam and the heart and soul to wage an uphill battle for human and civil rights for all of us.

So, what did Lynne do to deserve a 28 month sentence in lock-up? Well, that part of the story is a little hard to pin down. It is clear from the record, and history will confirm if we are patient, that the Bush administration had a serious and effective commitment to dismantling human and civil liberties in their response to the destruction of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. The Patriot Act that George Bush signed into law on October 26, 2001 gutted First and Fourth Amendment Rights with sneak-and-peak warrantless searches and broad gag-order subpoenas designed to limit public awareness of the abrogation of fundamental American rights. And the Patriot Act was the tip of the iceberg. The really offensive and illegal acts that the Bush administration wanted to pursue - like the aggressive and unwarranted invasion of Iraq as well as the kidnapping, torturing and/or assassination of our "enemies", and the establishing of a secret prison system designed to be outside or above any law - was done outside the purview of the courts and without the dubious benefit of pesky questions that Congress might raise.

At the center of this government maelstrom are individuals like Abdel-Rahman, Osama bin Laden, Khalid Shaikh Mohammad, Ayman al-Zawahiri – tools, fools, fanatics and sometime CIA assets. These people made it all possible with their determined criminal assaults on symbols of US imperialism and globalization like the Twin Towers, the USS Cole, the Pentagon, troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, US embassies and any visible manifestation of Eisenhower's military-industrial complex. And there stands Lynne Stewart, part of Abdel-Rahmin's highly regarded legal defense team, a team that also included past US Attorney General Ramsay Clark, among others. The work of this defense team predated the September 2001 destruction of the Twin Towers and the passage of the Patriot Act, but Abdel-Rahman was an incarcerated principal of Al-Qaeda whose religious edicts, or fatwas, carried lethal weight with rank-and-file Islamic suicide bombers and martyr-wannabes. Can we let a guy like this speak from jail or from a courtroom knowing the likelihood of deadly violence that might arise from letting his voice be heard? It's a good question. It's one of the questions that arise from a recent decision by US Attorney General Eric Holder's decision to bring Khalid Shaikh Mohammad to court in New York to be tried for his part in the 2001 destruction of the World Trade Center Towers. Before the Patriot Act and the Bush administration's attack on civil and human rights, the answer would have generally been, yes, an incarcerated individual

▸ **LYNNE STEWART,** continued on page 6

**by Mike Coday**

LOCAL NEWS:

• Late breaking news: Four Lakewood police officers were killed as we were preparing to print for December. Sincere condolences to the families of these officers and all of the folks who are grieving over these senseless deaths.

• Olympia Police Department Officers shot and killed no one since August 15, 2009.

REGIONAL NEWS:

• The killing of Seattle police officer Timothy Brenton on Halloween follows the firebombing of several police vehicles on October 22nd. This would be a good time to be very careful on the streets of Seattle as we pass the 10th anniversary of the Seattle police riot at the WTO.

• Journalist Amy Goodman was subjected to a 90 minute interrogation when trying to enter British Columbia on November 25th. The focus of the interrogation suggests that BC security folks were very concerned about Amy's possible coverage of the 2010 Winter Olympics. Goodman was reportedly attempting to enter Canada with dangerous equipment including microphones, computer, camera gear and numerous sharp utensils containing an ink-like substance.

• The Public Employment Relations Committee ruled in early October that the Seattle police civilian review board had the right to review unredacted police records in accord with a May 2006 City Ordinance that gave the civilian review board the right to unredacted police discipline files. The Seattle Police Officers Guild won an initial decision to redact names from the files provided to the review board on the basis that it was necessary for the City to negotiate this issue with the Guild. The Guild has not announced if it will appeal the October ruling.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS:

• Quebec peace officers were found guilty by an Ethics Committee for posing as protestors at the North American Leaders Summit in Montebello, Quebec in August 2007. The three police officers were found to have "failed to respect the authority of the law by inciting persons to violence." The officers have not been charged with a crime yet and may be available to provide special security at the Winter Olympics. They already own their black bloc outfits.

TASER WORLD:

• Taser International released a bulletin on September 30, 2009 advising taser users to aim away from the chest to avoid the controversy over whether or not the Taser jolts do or do not affect the heart. Tasers should now be aimed at the balancing muscles in the pelvic area. Yep, that sounds better.

• Jared Feuer of Amnesty International reports that 277 people died between June 2001 and October 2007 in the USA after being tased. Feuer also claims that 80% of individuals tased in the United States were unarmed when they were tased. There are no statistics available at deadline regarding how many of these folks have armed themselves since being tased.

Let's all be careful out there.

*Mike Coday had reservations about printing this after the Lakewood police executions, but the layout team thinks that just because one person commits an act that is brutal, violent, and senseless, that doesn't mean we should forget that the cops can also be described with those same three words.*

▸ **LYNNE STEWART,** continued from page 6

gets to speak. An incarcerated person does not lose the freedom to speak, to write, or to remain in touch with their allies and supporters just because they are convicted and imprisoned. But we live in strange times, times reminiscent of McCarthy's communist witch-hunt of the 1950s, when good sense and civil rights are equally scarce.

In 1996 our government put regulations in effect at the Federal Bureau of Prisons that are commonly referred to as SAMS (special administrative measures). The SAMS are sometimes used to completely isolate an inmate from the world and Abdel-Rahman was one such inmate. Lynne Stewart was denied access to her client until she accepted these limitations. Lynne believed, as many of us still do, that these special administrative measures are unconstitutional violations of the First, Fourth and Sixth Amendments. Our historic right to confidential communication with our lawyers is part of the reasonable expectation of privacy protected by the Constitution's Fourth Amendment, which prohibits unreasonable government intrusions on privacy. On October 30, 2001 Attorney General John Ashcroft approved a rule that allowed federal agents to conduct surveillance and monitoring of attorney-client communications. This new rule stepped right over traditional controls like the modest constraints of a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) warrant. This rule went into effect immediately and set the Attorney General above the law, the courts, and the Constitution when it came to decisions regarding invasion of confidential communications between attorney and client. Lynne Stewart had good reason to believe that her communications with Abdel-Rahman were being monitored. Nothing in Lynne's conduct with her representation of Abdel-Rahman shocks the conscience or screams support of terrorism. It was a shock to many, in and outside of the legal community, to see Lynne Stewart arrested and charged with aiding and abetting a terrorist organization as a result of her work as court-appointed attorney to Abdel-Rahman. The prosecution had its ups and downs, but finally, on February 10, 2005, Lynne was found guilty on five counts. As a convicted felon, she was disbarred. In the end, it seems that what Lynne Stewart did to get sentenced to 28 months in jail was that she showed a certain degree of contempt for the unconstitutional limitations imposed on her work as attorney for Abdel-Rahman. She could have fought for protection of the rights of attorney-client privilege instead of signing the special administrative measures that have led to her own conviction and incarceration, but that fight meant that Abdel-Rahman would be without benefit of counsel for an indeterminate length of time, and justice delayed is justice denied. And Lynne Stewart jailed is justice undone.

Lynne now joins a long list of illustrious and principled folks who have been incarcerated for what they believe or who they are. This group includes folks like Henry Thoreau, a piker on incarceration who spent a night or two in jail for not paying his taxes, and Nelson Mandela at the other end of the principled incarceration spectrum with 27 years before he was released and went on to become the President of post-apartheid South Africa. This group includes Martin Luther King Jr. and Mohandas K. Gandhi who both saw the inside of numerous jails and courtrooms over their lifetimes. This group includes Steven Biko and countless others who die of the natural causes that accompany incarceration as a political tool. It includes political prisoners like Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu Jamal who continue to maintain their dignity and humanity while jailed without an end in sight. Injustice is as American as cherry pie. Just ask Rodney King, Dalton Trumbo, or Fred Hampton.

> Before the Bush administration, the answer would generally have been yes, an incarcerated individual does not lose the freedom to speak, to write, to remain in touch with their supporters. But we live in strange times.

So, today, as Lynne Stewart spends her first holiday season behind bars, we have the promised spectacle of the trial of terrorists in New York. Lynne's shadow from jail falls darkly on any attorney who feels the call to step up and provide a diligent, competent defense for Khalid Shaikh Mohammad and his co-defendants. These new trials promise to pose special challenges for our judicial system because of the outrageous treatment that these human beings have endured since they were detained by the Home of the Brave and the Land of the Free. Can a justice system deliver any measure of justice to these people if it will not allow the defendants to speak about their torture in the custody of the United States? Can a justice system deliver any measure of justice if certain suspects are forever outside the reach of legal representation while other suspects are tortured and denied due process and basic human and civil rights? Any attorney thinking about stepping up to defend Khalid Shaikh Mohammad and his co-defendants should stop and visit with Lynne Stewart for some advice on the price of principle. If you see Lynne, give her my best, she deserves nothing less.

# South Sound Reconciliation Process Begins With Sunrise Ceremony

**by Sandia Slaby**

Inspired by the Sunrise Ceremony that has occurred on Alcatraz on the 3rd Thursday of November every year for the last 40 years, about forty Native and Non-Native people gathered on November 26, 2009 in a circle of prayer by the lake in downtown Olympia. This Sunrise Ceremony gathering commemorates the start of a reconciliation process here in Olympia. The process will happen over time through dialogues with any and all Native and Non-Native Peoples who are willing to come and share their stories and listen to others' stories, attend reconciliation meetings, and view video presentations of how our pasts have unfolded. The hope of those who called this circle is to bring people together through the path of the sacred. A safe place will be created wherein Native and Non-Native individuals could come from their different worlds and begin to build new relationships.

Elders, children, men and women gathered before the day broke on that mild and drizzly morning. The sun rose above the cloud cover as the ceremony began with a Native flute song. A smudge stick was lit to cleanse the circle, and participants were woven into the process. Some light joking and greetings occurred among folks who had never met. A Welcomer thanked the spirits, and acknowledged the ancestors of the five Native Nations who for centuries congregated to fish and gather shell fish, etc. right where we were standing, which is now landfill. Also acknowledged were the many Chinese, who later resided on this same piece of earth in what was then called "China Town", until they too were run off the land.

The Welcomer asked the ancestors permission for us to be there and invited them to join us. Drummers drummed and Native songs were sung; one song was offered to this circle; some songs were sung by many of the Native and Non-natives together. A quiet, sweet, excitement was growing in the air, as the participants of this gathering were experiencing the beginning of new possibilities amongst us.

After the singing, a Talking Stick was passed around, and much thanks and gratitude was expressed to the conveners for this ceremony along with some grief, some hope, some caution, willingness, intentions, excitement, love, ETC.

The ceremony came to a close following a few more songs, and then folks went on into their day, I'd say, a bit differently than we had on any other 3rd Thursday in November; even if just a wee bit differently!

A lot of work, and hard work at that, lies ahead for any and all interested in participating in the upcoming reconciliation process in Olympia. For now, we who were at this beginning circle, I believe, are giving thanks for a quiet, sweet, hope we are experiencing.

For anyone interested in helping/joining with the reconciliation process, please contact: ravenredbone@gmail.com

*Sandia Slaby is an elder care manager and provider, an independent media activist and facilitates distribution of Works in Progress.*

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# A Governor's challenge: Lead the Way on Clean Air and Green Jobs

## *Is it time to pull the plug on the Centralia Coal Plant?*

**By Mike Coday**

In April, Trans Alta, the Canadian company that operates the Centralia Coal Plant between Centralia and Tenino, reached an agreement with the State to reduce mercury pollution by 50 percent and nitrogen oxide pollution by 20 percent. The deal was negotiated behind closed doors over a two-year period by Governor Gregoire's office and the State Department of Ecology. A brief period for public comment on this agreement ended on Nov. 9. Numerous environment groups including the Sierra Club and the Northwest Environmental Defense Council have objected to the State's closed-door process with Trans Alta that produced this agreement. Earthjustice, a public interest law firm, filed an appeal of the air pollution permit granted to Trans Alta on Sept. 28.

The Centralia Coal Plant, the only coal burning plant in Washington, is not only the state's largest source of mercury pollution (a neurotoxin) and haze-causing nitrogen oxide pollution, it is responsible for approximately 10 percent of the state's global warming emissions and produces approximately 10 percent of the state's electricity. The Earthjustice appeal contends that the agreement between the Governor's office and Trans Alta allows the company to continue the plant operations without meeting industry standards for pollution reduction or the legal requirements of numerous laws, including the Washington and Federal Clean Air Acts.

The collapse of the global economy makes this a very difficult time to ask workers at the Centralia Coal Plant to give up their jobs for the sake of clean air. It is, however, the perfect moment for Governor Gregoire and Trans Alta to correct the mistake of the past two years by making a commitment to convert the Centralia Coal Plant to clean energy and green jobs. This would meet the state's obligations to clean air and make this state a leader in the reduction of greenhouse gases.

For further information, the Cascade Chapter of the Sierra Club (www.cascade.sierraclub.org) has more details on the environmental issues posed by the Centralia Coal Plant.

Trans Alta used to operate both a coal mine and the coal plant at Centralia and was the largest employer in Lewis County before shutting down the mine. The jobs lost with the closing of the coal mine operation were jobs that paid a living wage. Many local businesses continue to feel the loss of the coal mine and the coal mine's payroll. The coal to power the Centralia plant now arrives in hundreds of rail cars. An immediate shutdown of this plant, putting more folks out of work, makes little sense. The current economic situation calls for investment in infrastructure, however Mr. Peabody's coal train should not run through Washington State.

A rust-worn train rumbles through the idyllic, peaceful collage of distant clouds, vast Centralia treescapes and that fucking coal plant. Unless... Photo by Mike Coday.

Local environmental groups should seize this opportunity to coordinate their action with the legal challenge raised to the Centralia Coal Plant's permit to pollute. Progressives and climate activists need to extend an open hand to labor to join in political action to persuade State government to develop good public policy that protects our jobs, our families, and our environment.

The 2009 State Legislature directed six state agencies - Ecology, Agriculture, Commerce, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources and Transportation - to draft a climate change strategy by Dec. 1, 2011. We have a year to work on incorporating a clean energy conversion of the Centralia Coal Plant into the December 2011 climate change strategy. With 10 percent of the state's greenhouse gas production, a conversion of the coal plant should be the cornerstone of the State's climate change strategy.

Let Governor Gregoire know where you stand on the Centralia Coal Plant by contacting her Environmental Policy Advisor:

Executive Policy Advisor Keith Phillips
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia WA 98504-0002

You can also fax your thoughts on the Centralia Coal Plant to Governor Gregoire at 360-753-4111 or call the Governor's Office at 360-753-4110.

*Mike Coday is a resident of Chehalis and frequent contributor to WIP.*

# Police shooting of ER patient raises questions in Oly

**By Nigel Weiss**

In the early hours of Aug. 15, Joseph Burkett was shot and killed by Officer Chris Cook of the Olympia Police in the emergency room at Saint Peter's Hospital. According to police accounts, Burkett, 43, was shot in the abdomen by Cook with his service pistol at point-blank after a physical struggle over a revolver Burkett had smuggled into the hospital. A police investigation released in September concluded Cook was justified in having killed Burkett, and based on this the Thurston County Prosecutor's Office will apparently decline to bring charges against Cook or the OPD.

Cook had arrived after hospital staff called 9-1-1 because Burkett was being "unruly," according to OPD spokesperson Lt. Jim Partin. Hospital staff were warned by Burkett's mother when she dropped him off for a head injury that he may have been armed, according to Olympia Police Cmdr. Tor Bjornstad. After Cook arrived at the ER, he frisked Burkett and found two loaded pistols, but not the third that Burkett is reported to have drawn while later receiving treatment, police have said.

But the question remains of where a third gun could have come from after Cook said he frisked Burkett.

A summary released by the Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office recounts the police's version of the morning's events. After Burkett got to the ER, hospital staff called the police, though it isn't clear whether they did so after being warned by Burkett's mother, or because he had become "unruly," since police accounts differ on that detail. Before Cook got to the ER, hospital staff say, Burkett had been left alone in a room - B-11 - and he was emerging from the bathroom when Cook first arrived. In his written summary of the shooting investigation, Chief Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Jon Tunheim contends that Burkett must have stashed the revolver that began the struggle somewhere in room B-11 before Cook got there and then retrieved it after Cook had already frisked him.

> A police investigation released in September concluded Cook was justified in having killed Burkett and will apparently decline to bring charges against Cook or the OPD.

However, this is far from clear, as Tunheim himself admits. "Unfortunately, we will likely never know exactly how Burkett came to have the third gun in the crisis services area," he wrote.

After Cook frisked Burkett and found two weapons on him, he handcuffed Burkett and waited for the hospital to medically clear him, according to Tunheim's summary. After this point, though, the summary says Burkett remained handcuffed or under escort until the time he was finally uncuffed, moments before the shooting, and made to change into a hospital gown in the bathroom.

Strange, then, that Tunheim's hypothesis is that Burkett hid the alleged third weapon in room B-11, since the timeline of events in his summary indicates Burkett was actually handcuffed to a hospital bed in the room the only time he would have had a chance to retrieve a hidden gun.

The only other place Tunheim's timeline would imply a weapon could have been hidden and later recovered is the hospital bathroom.

So why did Tunheim say that for Burkett to have stashed a weapon in room B-11 was "the most reasonable inference from the facts?" Possibly the reason is that, based on common sense, a hospital bathroom doesn't sound like a believable place someone could have hidden a revolver for the almost two hours that elapsed between when Burkett was first frisked and when he emerged from the bathroom and was then shot by Cook.

Having read Tunheim's timeline, "the most reasonable inference," in my own observation, is that neither Tunheim nor police have any idea where a third gun would have come from. They find it easier to make out speculation as fact, instead of questioning whether Cook just missed the alleged third weapon when he first frisked Burkett.

Cook was placed on paid administrative leave after the shooting. He has now returned to duty after an internal review.

Burkett is the second person in a year to be killed by the Olympia police. In November 2008, Jose Ramírez-Jiménez, 24, was shot in the back by three Olympia police after fleeing from them in a car. The three who shot Ramírez-Jiménez -- Charles Gassett, Paul Bakala, and Michael Hovda -- were similarly found to have been justified in their killing and remain on the police force, despite serious questions that remain surrounding the killing and the subsequent police investigation.

Cases such as Burkett's and Ramírez-Jiménez's, and the exoneration of their killers, demonstrate the need for an impartial, third-party critical investigation of police when they may have committed a crime, especially one as serious as murder. This certainly doesn't mean that these officers are guilty, but it does mean that the investigations of the very real possibility that the officers have committed crimes, as they stand, have been inadequate. If real justice is to be gotten for those who have died, they should be reopened by qualified third parties.

*Nigel Weiss is an Evergreen student who works in the community around war resistance and police accountability. He can be reached through Olympia Police Accountability at olypola@gmail.com.*

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▸ **POLICE KILLINGS,** continued from page 1

thing I will not argue with. A police officer who killed a murderer in cold blood should be stripped of their badge regardless of the guilt or innocence of the person they shot.

But there are moral grey areas surrounding the killing of officers in other situations. For example, if a police officer who had been trying to make an arrest and instead shot and killed an armed man in hot pursuit can be exonerated as fulfilling their obligation to keep the public safe, could the same be said about a civilian who shoots an armed police officer who had just beaten or killed a civilian and was attempting to flee the scene of their crime?

After all, cops who assault, rape, and kill are judged not by the community – whom should be able to decide whether the use of force makes their lives safer or more dangerous – but by other cops, and so they are almost never brought to justice.

Because of public outcry against this state of impunity, the city of Seattle created an Office of Professional Accountability in 1999 with the goal of allowing citizen oversight of the police. However, the OPA was not independent of the police department, and after a year and a half, the murder of Aaron Roberts by two white police officers revealed that the office was toothless.

In 2002, the OPA Review Board was created, which was given power to review closed cases and write reports about how they feel the police department handled the situation, but the city prevented them from releasing their reports to the public. Over the past two years, criticism from both inside and outside the city government led to a number of blue ribbon commissions and a further reorganization of the OPA, but the latest incarnation still lacks the ability to reopen closed cases and still penalizes board members for releasing information to the public. And if the problem is not whether all cops are crooked or that the police do not serve a useful role in our communities, but that good cops refuse to speak out against their corrupt coworkers, at what point do you draw the line and demand that the police start policing themselves or face the consequences?

So is he a latter-day Huey P. Newton or Mumia Abu-Jamal, as I've heard some voices on the left suggest? Some bloggers have speculated that Brenton was killed not randomly, simply because he was a police officer, but because of his poor reputation among Seattle's inner city youth. The previous Halloween, a 15 year old named Quincy Coleman was shot and killed outside of the Garfield Community Center. Brenton was reportedly among the responding officers that night, and friends of Coleman have complained that Brenton didn't do anything to help the tense situation. Monfort may have picked up these criticisms of Brenton's crookedness from the kids he worked with in juvenile detention and decided to take matters into his own hands. But if Monfort thought he could singlehandedly declare war on the Seattle Police Department, he was clearly being delusional, and it is also a great disservice to reduce a man as visionary as Huey P. Newton to a mere cop-killer. While it is true that the Black Panther Party both practiced and preached armed self-defense for the black community, it was just that -- self defense. Their day-to-day operations focused on providing free food and medical care to the poor. It was these programs that the Black Panthers were distracted from by the FBI's successful attempt at provoking them into returning fire, which is what ultimately led to their violent demise. The strategy of going on the offensive against the police without also actively working to create a better world has less in common with the Black Panthers than with the urban guerrilla groups operating in Brazil. As anyone who has watched "City of God" can tell you, this is hardly a model to be recommended.

Brazil's police force is unquestionably worse than ours, having gained worldwide infamy in the 1990's for tackling problems like teen homelessness with all the sensitivity of a Salvadoran death squad. While the country was still under military rule, dissident intellectuals and criminals who were imprisoned together formed a paramilitary organization known as the Comando Vermelho that declared war against the state in 1979. Another group, Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC), was formed in response to the 1992 massacre at the Carandiru Prison in São Paolo and dedicated itself in its founding documents to "change the practice of incarceration (which is) inhuman, full of injustices, oppression, and tortures and massacres in the prisons." Both groups are well-organized and well-armed, controlling most of the slums of Rio de Janeiro and São Paolo, which even police helicopters are unable to fly over without fear of being taken out by anti-aircraft fire. Yet thirty years of urban guerrilla warfare have not brought an end to the abuses of the police. Both groups turned to the drug trade in order to fund their insurrections, and they now engage in turf war with each other and with their splinter groups as often as they fight the government. And in a final, ironic twist, some Brazilian police departments have agreed to truces with these organizations – agreeing not to prosecute members for drug trafficking as long as they agree to police the slums themselves – but the urban guerrillas have proven to be just as violent and arbitrary as the system they once swore to fight.

Starting a war against the police isn't just foolish, counterproductive, fanatical, or whatever you want to call it – it's based on a tragic misunderstanding of our whole predicament. The police don't so much resemble an occupying military force that should be combated with paramilitary force than they resemble an abusive partner – they beat us (literally), yet we feel we can't live without them. It isn't enough to point out that mass imprisonment is not only a bad solution to the problem of crime but also a counterproductive one as long as it remains the only solution our society has. While self defense is an inalienable right, challenging the system effectively requires concretely proposing something better. This is what the Black Panthers understood, what the man who killed Brenton did not, and the reason why the Comando Vermelho ended up policing their own communities for the Brazilian government. And it's easy to swear up and down that you will never call the cops out of anger for their racism, their brutality, and the impunity that they operate with, but a boycott of the police only works until you become a victim of crime yourself. Within a community of Olympia activists who would never dream of calling the police I know of several cases of abusive behavior and domestic violence, and I also know of several groups of people who are trying to find ways to deal with these situations without using the criminal justice system. Watching these hastily improvised community accountability processes is alternately inspiring and frustrating. Frustrating because beginnings are always rocky, and because not enough time has been spent ensuring that what is going on makes sense to people outside of the accountability process, yet also inspiring because they point toward a way of dealing with violence and other problems in our community that doesn't involve mass incarceration or a violent, racist system of policing that has staunchly resisted any attempt at regulation or citizen oversight, and this without starting a suicidal war against the state. Because in a way, the murder of Officer Brenton was the worst thing that happened for those of us who dream of holding the Seattle Police Department accountable for the horrific acts of violence they have perpetrated. How else can you describe an event that causes people who have consistently spoken out against police violence and in some cases even ridiculed the OPA as the "Office of Police Apologia" begin to refer to police as "peace officers" and superheroes?

> A boycott of the police only works until you become a victim of crime yourself.